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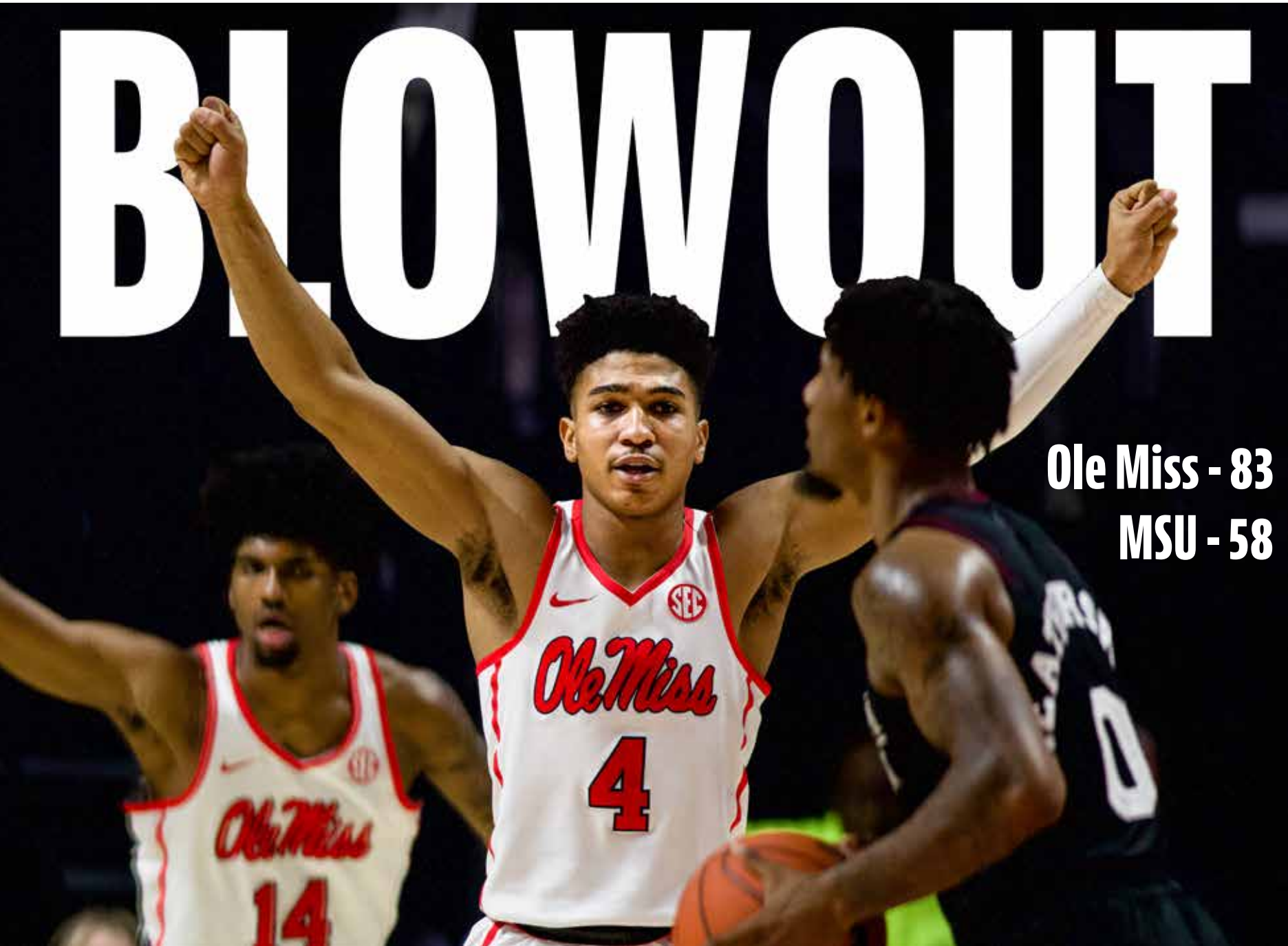
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Ole Miss - 83
MSU - 58

REED JONES / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

Breein Tyree defends a Mississippi State player in the 83-58 win on Tuesday in Oxford. Tyree had five rebounds.

In just three games, the Rebels became one of the scariest teams in the SEC

JOSHUA CLAYTON
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The Ole Miss men’s basketball team finished its three-game home stand with what turned out to be the biggest game of the season against the Mississippi State Bulldogs in the Pavilion on Tuesday.

The new and improved team put together 24 minutes of inspired basketball in front of a raucous

crowd to steal a roller coaster of an 83-58 victory over its rival.

Senior guard Breein Tyree put up 27 points during the second half to finish with a career-high of 40 points. Tyree outscored the Bulldogs by three points in the second half and said he knew he was chasing 40.

“Coming down to the end of my career at Ole Miss, I want to be remembered as one of the best guards to ever come here,” Tyree said. “I want to

give fans, my parents (and) everybody something to cheer for... I’ve been scoring at a high rate lately, and just in that second half (by) scoring 27, I’d probably say that’s one of my best games.”

With convincing wins over South Carolina and Florida this past week, the Rebels brought a new late-season buzz to the program, and it showed in the attendance Tuesday with a packed, vibrant

SEE **BLOWOUT** PAGE 5

\$26m donated for STEM building

HADLEY HITSON
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Last week, Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) trustee Thomas Duff and his brother Jim donated \$26 million to the university toward the construction of a new science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) building.

The 202,000-square-foot building, which is set to cost \$160 million total, was originally sched-

IHL trustee who tabled statue vote contributes to UM

uled to break ground in 2018 and open in 2020, but it has been continually delayed. Construction is now slated to begin later this year.

The Duffs committed the

money prior to the IHL Board of Trustees’ January meeting in which the board voted to name the STEM building as the Jim and Thomas Duff Center for Science and Technology Innovation.

In that same meeting, Thomas Duff motioned to delay the vote to relocate the Confederate monument on campus from the Circle to the Confederate cemetery. The vote was originally scheduled to

SEE **DONATION** PAGE 3

What it will take to rebuild UM’s website

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The University of Mississippi’s website will undergo its first major redesign in seven years, according to an unexpected announcement from Chancellor Glenn Boyce last week. After years of discussion, the redesign will have many steps to complete before the final rollout.

Robby Seitz, the university’s webmaster, confirmed that the university — the marketing and communications and information technology (IT) departments, specifically — is working on completely rebuilding the 20,000-page website, and he said that he’s pleased that the chancellor has this on his agenda.

SEE **WEBSITE** PAGE 8

Mike Bloomberg opens local office

ANNE FLORENCE BROWN
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The first 2020 presidential campaign office in Mississippi opened this week — and it’s in Oxford.

Mike Bloomberg posters outlining the Democratic presidential candidate’s message, “We Like Mike” are pasted across the walls that were formerly the Merle Norman and Hallmark store on Jackson Ave.

Jarrius Adams, director for Bloomberg’s Mississippi campaign and a recent Ole Miss alumnus, chose Oxford as a

This is the largest ground gain by a presidential candidate in the state since 1976 with Jimmy Carter,” Adams said.

Adams said the short term goal of Bloomberg’s local campaign is largely people-focused.

“Firstly, I want to get kind and energized young people on board with us. We are also trying to reach out and touch people. We want to make the case that Mike Bloomberg is a viable candidate. Since the election for a candidate is March 10, it is important to get people’s attention in the hopes that they will take action,” Adams said.



ANNE FLORENCE BROWN / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

Jarrius Adams chose Oxford as a location for one of three Mike Bloomberg offices in Mississippi.

“Oxford is key because of the university and community involvement. Mississippi is in its political prime with Bloomberg’s attention to it.”

- Jarrius Adams
 Director for Bloomberg’s Mississippi campaign

campaign office location.

“Oxford is key because of the university and community involvement. Mississippi is in its political prime with Bloomberg’s attention to it.

Oxford’s will be one of three Bloomberg offices in Mississippi. Gulfport and Jackson offices are opening by the end of the week, and for Mississippi — which is typically known as a red state — Bloomberg’s investment could mean a lot to potential voters.

“Imagine the city filled with dominoes falling and how the action of one causes another to act,” Kimar Cain, the campaign field organizer, said. “That has been the impact of Bloomberg in the city of Oxford and the northern region of Mississippi. People are leaning forward and passing along the information to various community members about Mike Bloomberg.”

On Sunday, there was an opening party where roughly 80 community members supported Bloomberg’s contribution to the state.

“Our state gets written off a lot even though we are still dealing with the same problems as the rest of the country. (Bloomberg’s) recognition of our red state as valuable is a huge message to voters everywhere,” Amy Scruggs, an Oxford community member, said. “Two of Bloomberg’s main policies — public health and education — are some of the biggest challenges we face and (are) thereby relevant.”

With the focus on community involvement and the people

of Oxford, the campaign is hoping to utilize the local college demographic.

“The Bloomberg campaign has the largest-paid staff in the state,” Katie Davis, president of College Democrats, said. “It appears that the sheer amount of personal wealth that Bloomberg is able and willing to devote has helped his campaign move into some spaces that other Democratic campaigns are not willing or able to invest in.”

Adams and Cain said the campaign is looking to encourage young people to vote. The final day to vote in the Mississippi primary elections is March 10.

JSU president resigns over prostitution scandal

ASSOCIATED PRESS
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JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — The president of Jackson State University resigned Monday after he was arrested in a prostitution sting in central Mississippi.

William Bynum Jr., 57, was among 17 people arrested during the weekend in the Jackson suburb of Clinton, according to Clinton Police Chief Ford Hayman.

A news release from the Mississippi university system on Monday said Bynum submitted his resignation, and it took effect

immediately. Within hours, the governing board for Mississippi’s eight public universities met and named another Jackson State administrator, Thomas Hudson, as interim president. Hudson has been special assistant to the president and chief diversity officer.

Bynum was arrested late Saturday or early Sunday and charged with procuring services of a prostitute, false statement of identity and simple possession of marijuana, Hayman said during a news conference Monday.

The people arrested were responding to an online ad for

prostitution services, and they were met by an undercover police officer at a chain hotel near Interstate 20, Hayman said.

The chief was asked if Bynum tried to convince police he was someone else.

“Without getting into particulars, yes, he was charged with that — providing a false identity,” Hayman said.

Bynum had been president of Jackson State since 2017 after serving four years as president of Mississippi Valley State University.

Among the other people arrested was Shonda McCa-

rthy, director of the Jackson State University art galleries. McCarthy, 46, was charged with procuring services of a prostitute and possession of marijuana while operating a motor vehicle.

The Associated Press left a message with the communications office at Jackson State on Monday. The call was not immediately returned. It was also not immediately clear whether either Bynum or McCarthy is represented by an attorney.

Bynum faced protests from some alumni and students when he was first chosen for the Jackson State presidency because

he was not among the three initial finalists. The university was having financial problems after overspending by a previous president. Bynum said the university would face three to five years of austerity.

“I understand I may not be your choice,” Bynum told one angry student in 2017. “All I say to you is, watch me work.”

A biography of Bynum on the Jackson State University website said his personal and professional motto is, “Look back and thank God. Look forward and trust God. Look around and serve God. Look within and find God.”



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CAMPUS CONNECTION

DONATION

continued from page 1

take place during that Jan. 16 meeting.

“There is no relationship at all between the STEM building gift and the decision to pull the relocation of the monument from the IHL agenda at its January meeting,” university spokesperson Rod Guajardo said. “Discussions about the gift were underway for several months prior to that meeting. These items simply happened to be discussed at the same IHL meeting.”

Jarvis Benson, an alumnus who was a member of the 2018-2019 Associated Student Body (ASB) Senate, said he had thought considerably about the apparent relationship between Duff and university administration following the donation.

Benson was one of the eight co-authors of the resolution to relocate the monument, and he said that since its passage in the ASB Senate, he has been continually embarrassed by the university’s decisions regarding relocation.

“The (university) administration continues to show that they are complacent in allowing the rich to control (the university),” he said. “I wish they would follow the lead of students and faculty calling for no-confidence in IHL instead of accepting gifts from board members.”

Barron Mayfield, the current ASB president, has continuously expressed support for the relocation of the Confederate monument, but he said he does not see any connection between the donation and the tabling of the resolution. Mayfield said he thinks the



new STEM building will enhance opportunities for students in the classroom and after graduation.

“It’s good for our students, it’s good for Ole Miss and it’s good for the state,” Mayfield said. “I trust that the Duff brothers — like all members of the Ole Miss community — love the university and want what is best for it.”

Following IHL approval on Jan. 16, Chancellor Glenn Boyce announced the donation on Feb. 5 in a university-wide email thanking the Duffs for the gift, which he said was one of the largest in the history of the university.

“This commitment is more than a gift,” Boyce said in the email. “It is an investment by the

new STEM building will enhance opportunities for students in the classroom and after graduation.

Jim and Thomas Duff donated \$26 million toward the construction of a new STEM building across from Vaught-Hemingway Stadium.

Duffs in our vision to produce graduates who fulfill critical needs and prepare them for rewarding careers.”

The building will house lecture halls for chemistry, biology, physics, engineering and computer science classes, and a university press release from Feb. 5 said that the classrooms will emphasize

ABOVE: BILLY SCHUERMAN
THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN
RIGHT: PHOTO COURTESY
UM COMMUNICATIONS



“technology-enabled active learning.” The university also plans to construct a visualization lab, similar to “a small IMAX theater.”

“We applaud the Duffs for

recognizing and addressing the crucial need to increase the number of graduates in STEM fields to fuel growth and innovation,” Boyce said.

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Jerrion Ealy throws the ball to first base during Friday's practice. The Rebels held an open practice on Friday and invited media to attend.

Who will line up in the Ole Miss outfield?

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Opening day is quickly approaching, and the Ole Miss baseball outfield could see a wide-ranging cast of athletes in the 2020 season, especially early in the campaign.

Head coach Mike Bianco said on Tuesday that he expects the outfield to have the most moving parts early in the season.

“The outfield is probably the most fluid situation,” Bianco said. “I expect it to be that way for the first few weeks at least and maybe even into the month of March and close to conference play.”

Six or more players could see time in the outfield this weekend against the top-ranked Louisville Cardinals, but one of the pressing questions leading up to this season has been about roles that dual-sport stars Jerrion Ealy and John Rhys Plumlee will play on this year's baseball squad.

Ealy and Plumlee made their presence known on the gridiron

last fall, but they are also expected to play a part in the Rebel outfield this spring, at least early in the season.

Let's make our way through who could find themselves in the outfield grass this weekend and in the games to come.

Left field will likely be occupied by some combination of sophomore Kevin Graham and community college transfer-Hayden Leatherwood. Graham spent most of his time at first base or designated hitter last season but will be transitioning to the outfield for 2020 and occupying the occasional DH slot.

Leatherwood, a product of Northwest Mississippi Community College, hit .333 with seven home runs and 24 RBIs as a sophomore in Senatobia.

Center field will be Ealy's ground against Louisville on Friday night, but fellow freshman Cade Sammons could see time there as well.

Ealy was a coveted prospect for the MLB draft before his draft

stock fell during his senior season at Jackson Prep, but he has been successful in intrasquad games this spring, earning the starting nod from Bianco.

Right field could be a revolving door — perhaps more so than the other two outfield spots. Bianco first mentioned Plumlee when he came to right field, but the head coach also stated that freshman Peyton Chatagnier and sophomore Justin Bench could see time there when they are not playing second base. Still, it appears the football stars have carved roles for themselves on this team.

Only time will tell if those roles stick. It will take time for Bianco to find what combination of outfielders works best defensively and at the plate, but this is the way of college baseball.

These position battles sort themselves out naturally, and we should have a pretty good idea of who the predominant outfielders will be when LSU comes to town to open conference play down the road.

Four former Rebels invited to NFL scouting combine

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This year's NFL combine will feature four Ole Miss seniors with Josiah Coatney, Benito Jones, Qadir Sheppard and Scottie Phillips all receiving invites.

These former Rebels will endure an assortment of drills, workouts, interviews and evaluations to extend their football career to the professional level.

Coatney, a defensive tackle, has put up multiple strong seasons for the Rebels as he enters the combine.

The senior from Douglasville, Georgia accumulated 174 total tackles and 6.5 sacks in three seasons. Coatney is currently training for the combine in Miami, hoping to have a positive showing in front of NFL scouts after a strong performance at the Senior Bowl in January.

Jones will join his fellow defen-

sive lineman at the combine after a trip to the Senior Bowl.

The 329-pound senior had 5.5 sacks and an interception during his final season at Ole Miss. Jones also had 19 solo tackles this season, his career high. After almost declaring for the draft in 2018, Jones is poised to impress scouts this year with an additional year of collegiate experience.

Staying on the defensive side of the ball, Sheppard, a 6-foot-3 edge defender from New York, played for the Rebels as a linebacker and made a splash in the 2018 season. He registered 48 total tackles and two forced fumbles.

However, Sheppard's 2019 campaign wasn't as strong, totaling only 25 total tackles after a hand injury early in the season. He made the switch from defensive end to pure outside linebacker last season.

The only offensive player invited to the combine was Phillips,

a 211-pound running back from Ellisville. Phillips played two years for the Rebels, accumulating 1,470 rushing yards in the 2018 and 2019 seasons. However, the majority of that yardage came in 2018.

Additionally, Phillips also had more yards per carry and total carries in the 2018 season. Some might see this as regression, but the Rebels' offense shined early in the 2019 season with Matt Corral's injury and run-centric John Rhys Plumlee's emergence as the lead quarterback.

With this change, much of the Rebels' rushing attack filtered through Plumlee or Jerrion Ealy, leaving Phillips to maximize his production on fewer chances. Phillips will be looking forward to proving himself in this year's combine by showing that his talents can transfer to the NFL.

The combine will run from Feb. 23 to March 2 in Indianapolis.



BILLY SCHUERMAN / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

Ole Miss defeated Mississippi State 83-58 on Tuesday in Oxford.



REED JONES
THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

Above: Khadim Sy fights for possession of the ball with a Mississippi State defender. Right: After the win, Ole Miss improved to 13-11 overall and 4-7 in the SEC.



BLOWOUT

continued from page 1

Pavilion ahead of the match-up.

However, the team on the court failed to match that enthusiasm with its performance early in the first half.

Other than a brief 2-2 run early in the game, the Rebels looked lost in the first half, giving up easy buckets around the rim, turning the ball over and committing unnecessary fouls.

Up front, MSU’s Reggie Perry and Abdul Ado outmatched Khadim “Dream” Sy and KJ Buffen. Buffen picked up three fouls with seven minutes left in the first half, and Sy reverted back to early-season Dream. Perry was fed regularly as he racked up nine points and five rebounds in the first half.

When the clock hit the 17-minute mark, the roles suddenly switched in the Rebels’ favor.

A 12-1 run on Sy’s back in the last three minutes of the first half got the Rebels back into the game. Devontae Shuler and Tyree found Sy for hard buckets down low, and the team was starting to come back into shape. Shuler took the momentum into the half by making a corner three to bring the Rebels within one point of the Bulldogs.

“The way we ended the half, I thought, was really critical,” head coach Kermit Davis said after the game. “A critical part in that first

half was really Khadim. He kind of kept us at arms reach (and) kept that thing at eight and 10.”

The Rebels built the energy back into the crowd slowly in the second half until the building erupted with about nine minutes left. Sy continued to get buckets under the goal, and even when he recorded his fourth foul, Tyree and Shuler kept it going by scoring at will over and over again.

The team got stop after stop and put the stranglehold on the Bulldogs. Tyree got past anyone lined up against him, and Shuler did the same when he was called upon. Sy refused to get bullied down low. Hinson did not hurt the team off the ball, and Buffen played well. Antavion Collum was not shooting, but with a plus-minus of 28 in 28 minutes, that was fine because he was playing stand-up defense when Sy was off the court.

The Rebels improve to 13-11 overall and 4-7 league record, with a new lease on life after winning three straight against some of the top teams in the SEC.

The team has gone from lost to electric in a matter of three games, and this game was the embodiment of that.

“In the SEC, you’re never out of it if you’ve got 10 or 12 games to go,” Davis said. “There’s just so many great opportunities for quadrant-one or quadrant-two wins. We’ve got a long way to go, and it’s tough, but (we will have) a great opportunity on Saturday at Kentucky.”

COLUMN

Valentine’s Day for singles

CAROLINE NIHILL
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It’s okay if you haven’t been shot by Cupid’s bow or if the love bug’s bite has gone away. Valentine’s Day can feel like the most dreaded day of the semester. This resentment can grow into an overall bad day between the social media posts, stores decorated with pink and red and couples everywhere. If you’re single on Valentine’s Day, for whatever circumstances, there may be pressure to do something rather than

nothing. “Galentine’s Day” is definitely something widely regarded as fun to do with your inner circle, but it’s not always achievable. There’s almost pressure to be celebrating something postable on social media. With a day dedicated to sharing yourself with another, it’s easy to get caught up in the endless stream of couples showing off their grandiose shows of gratitude and love. This can absolutely lead to feeling generally unhappy and almost resentful, and, let’s be real, who wants to feel that way?

The truth is, there are so many other versions of love than romantic. There’s platonic, familial and self-love. There are ways to feel a part of the worldwide network of this celebration without regrettably texting your ex (seriously, don’t). With some simple internet surfing, charities like children’s hospitals, such as St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital, allow you to send virtual Valentine’s to their patients. You can not only make someone’s day better, but encourage involvement to those who aren’t able to celebrate the holiday to its full extent. Campus Recreation is hosting a partner night, where you and a friend could participate in a buddy climb, partner yoga or cooking class. If you’re missing people back at home or friends who are farther away, there are ways to spend your day making Valentine’s Day crafts to send to your friends when you might be missing them the most. Valentine’s Day cardstock can easily be found around town

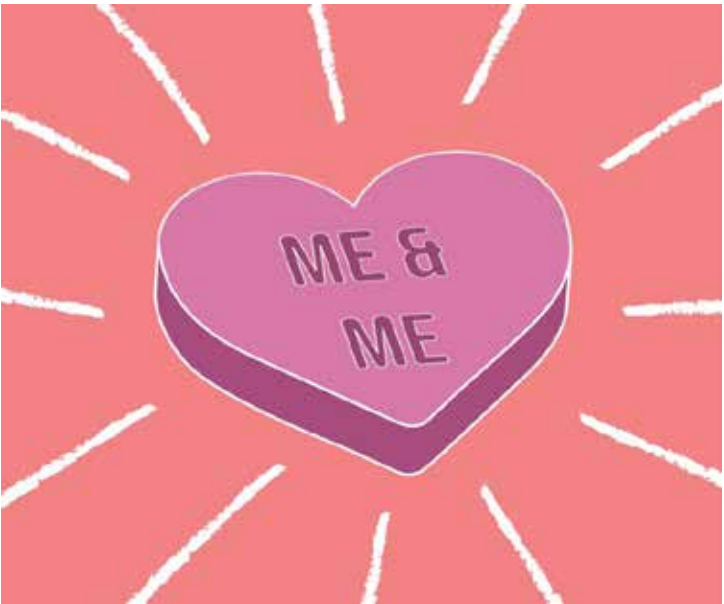


ILLUSTRATION BY KATHERINE BUTLER / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

and is ready to be shipped off to whoever you so please in time for the holiday. Maybe you and your friends are planning your own V-Day party just for friends, and this can help with including others on a day that might feel lonely. If you’re one for tradition, then I highly suggest planning this out. You can decorate your dorm or apartment with hearts and balloons, rent a cliché romance movie and order some of the town’s best junk food. The extra good news is that, this year, Valentine’s is on a Friday. Without having to worry about class the next morning, this could be the best time for a weekend road trip with your besties. You could plan a day trip to whichever town of your choosing to explore and treat yourself to anything as simple as brunch to something as pampering as a spa day. If you’re down about spending your Valentine’s alone, try to fill your day with others or activities which will help you enjoy the holiday a little bit more.

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ACROSS

- 1- Quick cut;
- 5- Wander about;
- 8- Hats;
- 12- Pick-me-up;
- 14- Different;
- 15- Settled down;
- 16- Soil;
- 17- Scottish loch, home to a monster;
- 18- Words of denial;
- 19- Fib;
- 21- Constrictor;
- 23- Far out!
- 24- Marker;
- 25- Film director Lee;
- 26- Jewish law;
- 30- Available;
- 32- Take ___ at (try);
- 33- Lacking intelligence;
- 37- Disencumbers;
- 38- Piece of French bread?;
- 39- To ___ (perfectly);
- 40- To keep company as a friend;
- 42- Nahuatl speaker;
- 43- Like Loki;
- 44- Show off;
- 45- Shoebox letters;
- 48- In medias ___;
- 49- Center of activity;
- 50- Interlocks;

DOWN

- 1- Do a slow burn;
- 2- Flood survivor;
- 3- Calvary letters;
- 4- Big East team;
- 5- Exultation;
- 6- Knucklehead;
- 7- Tyrannic;
- 8- Pious platitudes;
- 9- HI hi;
- 10- Metal spike used by mountaineers;
- 11- Sharp pain;
- 12- Winged child;
- 14- Geraint’s lady;
- 20- Young fellow;
- 22- Monetary unit of China;
- 24- Silly;
- 26- Skater Lipinski;

SOLUTION TO 2.10.20 PUZZLE



- 52- Contribution;
- 57- Ingrid’s “Casablanca” role;
- 58- The jig ___!
- 60- ___ Dame;
- 61- Lecherous look;
- 62- Lucie’s father;
- 63- New Mexico’s state flower;
- 64- Sea eagle;
- 65- Cornerstone abbr.;
- 66- Yonder thing;

- 27- Sale sign;
- 28- Old Fords;
- 29- Person who dresses stones;
- 30- Declaim;
- 31- Public square;
- 33- Copper and zinc alloy;
- 34- Famous last words;
- 35- Observed;
- 36- Faction of a group, often religious;
- 38- Type of FDR chat;
- 41- Heart;
- 42- Empire State capital;

- 44- Amusement;
- 45- “South Pacific” hero;
- 46- Conger catcher;
- 47- Ruhr city;
- 49- Snake dancers;
- 51- Fabled loser;
- 52- Finely powdered earth;
- 53- Advertise boastfully;
- 54- Hankering;
- 55- Killer whale;
- 56- Tidy, without fault;
- 59- Paris possessive;



Crossword puzzle provided by BestCrosswords.com (www.bestcrosswords.com). Used with permission.

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		2			1	3	
			6	2	8		
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8	2			1		5	4
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HOW TO PLAY

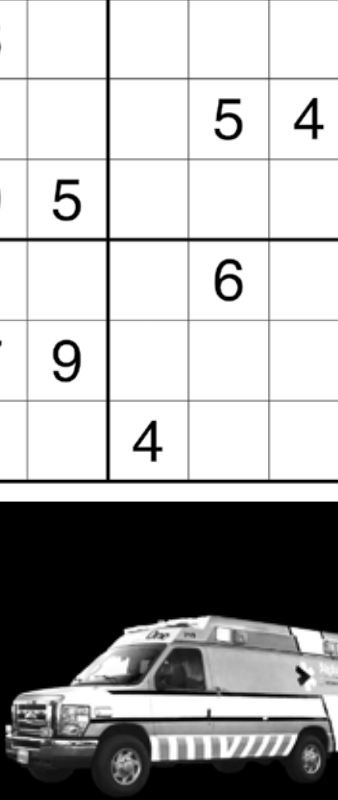
Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 with no repeats.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

INTERMEDIATE

7	6	4	3	9	5	1	8	2
2	8	5	6	1	7	3	4	9
1	6	3	2	4	8	6	7	5
8	7	2	5	9	4	6	1	3
4	5	6	9	1	3	7	2	8
3	1	9	7	8	2	4	5	6
5	2	7	4	3	6	8	6	1
6	4	8	1	2	6	5	3	7
9	3	6	1	8	7	5	2	4

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Oxford's Morning Newspaper

OPINION

Let's keep saying 'Ole Miss'

LAUREN MOSES
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On Monday, Feb. 3, The Daily Mississippian published an opinion column titled “We need to stop saying ‘Ole Miss.’” The author, Zach Borenstein, compared the affectionate nickname of our university to racially charged phrases, but he misses the point of tradition entirely.

My friends and I recently discussed the waning respect for tradition on our campus. From changing the school mascot to governing bodies voting to move the Confederate statue to contextualizing many buildings on campus, Ole Miss has lost its identity. Those who do not take the time to understand the importance of tradition may never know the beauty of our campus. The sweeping changes our great university has had over the past few years are indicative of a historically ignorant society.

The attack on Ole Miss reminds me of attacks the Left has levied against several American traditions. Holidays like Thanksgiving and Columbus Day are no longer acceptable because their histories are marred by oppression of minorities, but when we write off these days as “racist” and “insensitive,” we forget how important they were to the founding of this nation.

Thanksgiving is not a symbol of the white man’s domination of Native Americans, at least not anymore, nor is Columbus Day praising the horrible sins done to indigenous people. In fact, virtually no one celebrates these holidays in that context.

Like all countries, the United States has some moments to be extraordinarily proud of and others to look on with grief for the pain caused to others, but both Thanksgiving and Columbus Day — along with many other American traditions — culminate the founding and success of a nation built on freedom and justice. We remember these days to laud the great American spirit, not relive the horrors done to past generations.

Similarly, this is how we engage with traditions at Ole Miss. I agree with Borenstein and others that the origin story for the term “Ole Miss” is not one to celebrate. However, like many things in life, it has taken on a new meaning: that of affection for the school that nurtures us and grows us to change the world around us.

Few who utter the name “Ole Miss” conjure up images of slavery and oppression of black people. Rather, we reminisce over the joys and struggles, laughter and tears, triumphs and failures at this wonderful university. The traditions of our school are encompassed in the name “Ole Miss” as it ties together generations of alumni who have forged their path and accomplished great things.

Ole Miss is James Meredith and his revolutionary stand to desegregate the university. Ole Miss is first-generation Mississippi residents and their push to bring education to the poorest corners of this state. Ole Miss is Saturdays in the Grove and weekends in the right field of Swayze. Ole Miss is a top-tier research university and highly ranked accountancy program. Ole Miss is all of these things and more because generations of students have devoted their time and talents to shape the culture and traditions that our proud university stands on.

Why toss such a meaningful nickname to the wind because its distant history wasn’t pretty? The once muddled name “Ole Miss” has taken on new meaning and created a place built on traditions we can all be proud of. So, don’t change the name of the university. Keep Ole Miss a place where students understand its traditions and take pride in the institution it has become.

Lauren Moses is a junior economics and political science major from Coppell, Texas.

How Mississippi suppresses the college vote

EMILY STEWART
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The Iowa caucus started on Tuesday, Feb. 4, and two days later, we still weren’t sure who won. For days, two candidates claimed victory.

Citizens all over the country are calling for a revolution of our voting system. The Iowa Caucus is being used as a way to portray the United States as a failing democracy, and people all over the country are campaigning for change. However, the fight over how we count our votes is overshadowing all of the American citizens who were never given the chance to vote in the first place.

Across the country, inconsistent voting laws suppress our rights — especially in Mississippi. While these failures in democracy aren’t seen as much as the nationally acclaimed Iowa caucuses, they are equally, if not more, detrimental. Here are a few of the voting laws in Mississippi that make or break our voting opportunities, especially as college students:

There is no early voting in the state of Mississippi. As a Tennessean, I’ve grown up with “Vote Here” signs scattered all across my city weeks before the official election day. I didn’t know this wasn’t a nationwide rule until recently. I thought early voting was common sense, and as a student, early voting allows me to find a day to go home to vote in Tennessee elections if I don’t want to mail in an absentee ballot.

But my Mississippian friends don’t have this luxury. My roommate lives on the Mississippi coast, six hours south of Oxford. When she votes, she can either make the twelve hour round-trip drive on a weekday, or she can vote by absentee ballot. An absentee ballot can be sent through the mail, but it could arrive late or get lost. The ballot can also be turned in to the County Circuit Clerk Office, which is a safer approach. Either way, it has to be signed by a notary public, or another official witness and could include a fee. Is it impossible to vote? No, but the process is unnecessarily complicated. Put simply, I have more rights than my roommate, as a voter, as an American; Mississippi is stifling our right to vote.

As a college student, a simple solution is to update your address on your voter registration, but it’s not made to be very simple. Ordinarily, P.O. Boxes can’t be used as a permanent address on voter registrations forms, but college students are allowed an exception — as long as they turn in a signed affidavit, verifying their new address. A complex set of rules dictates how college students vote, and it takes more than a quick google search to decipher them. Even if you do know all of the rules, they may not work in your favor, if you aren’t able to receive an affidavit, for example.

Even college students who are close to their precincts have a difficult time voting. If you have classes all day, homework to finish and no way to drive to your voting precinct, you may not have the time, or the resources, to vote — or to get your absentee ballot notarized. A better solution would be a voting precinct on our campus and a concise set of laws to guarantee our votes.

While writing this column, I had an incredibly hard time finding clear, consistent information on voting laws. The rules are written awkwardly and made difficult to understand for a young person wanting to know how to vote. It’s intimidation, and it’s wrong.

Emily Stewart is a freshman international studies and Arabic major from Columbia, Tennessee.

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WEBSITE
continued from page 1

Seitz said that the new website’s primary focus will be to recruit prospective students. Enrollment at the university has decreased 3.5% over the past year, according to a press release from the Institutions of Higher Learning from last fall, and this is the third consecutive year that enrollment fell.

“It seems like (recruiting) is really important,” Seitz said. “It’s one of the key things you should be using your website for because, yes, as they always say, it’s one of the first things that students who might not be familiar with your college will ever see about your college.”

Seitz said that he would be working on the organization of the website. Currently, it is built on multiple servers, which complicates the redesign. He said the university’s solution is to use a new content management system, Cascade 8, which the department purchased last year.

When discussed at last week’s Associated Student Body (ASB) Senate meeting, Boyce estimated the budget for the new website to be \$1.5 million, but Seitz could not confirm this figure. For the exact price, he referred to the university’s public relations officials, who did not respond by time of publication.

Seitz said that before Boyce, IT officials mentioned completely redoing the website, but there was never any actionable plan behind it.

“The fact that he’s even said something like, ‘Yes, we’re going to redo the website.’ That’s helping



PHOTO COURTESY: THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

Ole Miss has not updated its website in seven years. Boyce said the redesign will cost around \$1.5 million.

so much because now people actually are interested, saying ‘Oh, well, Chancellor Boyce said that, let’s do that thing,’” Seitz said.

Seitz said the university has hoped to redesign the entire site so that all individual webpages are similar. He said this idea has been discussed for years.

“This actually goes back to Chancellor (Robert) Khayat,” Seitz said. “I had word from his office that he was surfing the web, which he didn’t do very often. He was searching the web for something or another, and he came up to a school’s biology website. He said, ‘Well, this looks great. We should get some of the stuff that they’re

doing and do it here,’ and then he figured out it was actually our biology website. It didn’t look anything like the rest of the university’s site.”

Boyce and Seitz agreed that the website’s lack of mobile functionality is an issue. Seitz referenced prospective students in different countries having trouble accessing the site.

“We’ve got people in sub-Saharan Africa using flip phones and have tried to navigate our website, so we’ve got to be mindful of that sort of audience as well,” Seitz said.

Boyce announced his plan to “tear down” and rebuild the university’s website at an ASB Senate meeting last Tuesday.

“(The website) is antique,” Boyce said at the meeting. “One of the major problems with that website is that it’s not mobile friendly, and that’s a huge problem. When a parent wants to go to pay their bill from their phone, and they can’t get into the website and pay it to the bursar and so forth, that’s a serious problem.”

Jim Zook, university chief marketing and communications officer, later said that the university did not expect the redesign plans to be shared with the public at that meeting.

“You may have seen in the DM last week (that) we are about to embark on a whole new university website working in partnership with IT,” Zook said at a faculty senate meeting Tuesday evening. “We didn’t expect that to go public at this point, but it’s going to be a busy year or so to get that going.”

Amy Rhodes, a sophomore French and international studies major, said the university’s website is not very engaging — especially when viewing majors or the course catalogue.

“(The website consists of) very academic language and not something that would be good for exploring all the university has to

offer,” Rhodes said. “There’s also no pictures or graphics.”

Seitz said he has always seen the website as a recruiting tool of sorts.

Boyce emphasized recruiting prospective students at the ASB meeting last week. He said that the university has plans to increase the amount of mail sent out to high school students and use data gathered from prospective students to market the university to them specifically.

“They have identified a point where you can almost send information into homes now because of technology and data that basically says, ‘I know what that student’s interest is inside that home,’” Boyce said at the meeting. “We can almost target students with your interests. We don’t even know you, and we can say, ‘Over here, they’re going to be really interested in leadership.’”

Seitz is not quite sure when the redesign would be finished, but he said it would likely be the middle of next year before the university would be ready for it to launch.

“I think it’s going to be nice, and it’ll be something fresh — at least something that we’ll get to look at and say, ‘Wow, that doesn’t look so 2013,’” Seitz said.

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